

## **WEEK OF MARCH 25, 2002: MDOT FLASH FACTS**

### **TOPIC: Intersections**

About 12,000 collisions occur at intersections each year in Maine. These crashes result in about 30 fatalities each year and an estimated economic loss of over \$300 Million annually. To avoid becoming a statistic, please follow these safety tips:

- When traffic control devices indicate you must stop, make sure to come to a complete stop. Look left (this is the direction from which the first vehicle can strike you), right, then left again. Look for oncoming traffic, including bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Even if you have a green light or the other driver has the stop sign, watch the approaching vehicles to make sure they will stop.
- When making a right turn on red, come to a full stop. Look for pedestrians first on your right, then make sure there is no oncoming traffic from the left.
- Rear End crashes account for about 44% of all intersection crashes. To avoid becoming involved in a rear end collision: maintain a safe following distance, be prepared to stop and keep an eye on your rear view mirror -- leave yourself an "out" in the event the vehicle behind you does not stop.
- When waiting to make a turn, keep your front wheels straight. This will prevent you from being pushed into oncoming traffic if you get rear -ended.
- When merging at on-ramps and other locations, check for oncoming traffic from your left, but also watch the vehicle in front to be sure it has committed to merge before you proceed. (Sometimes the driver in front of you decides not to go.)
- When turning left at a signalized intersection, recognize that you have the right of way only on a green arrow. If there is only a green light, you must yield to oncoming traffic.
- When the traffic signal light turns to yellow, slow down and stop unless the vehicle behind you cannot stop.
- Disregarding Traffic Control Devices accounts for nearly 14% of all signalized intersection crashes. The most common causes of crashes at intersections controlled by stop signs are driver inattention or failure to yield.